THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cowper.*

WHERE COULD MR. OATWAY BE GOING AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT?

CHAMBERCOMBE.

A TALE OF NORTH DEVONSHIRE.

IT was a dripping day sure enough, a day which even a Devonshire man, accustomed as he is to soft weather, might worthily chronicle as "wringing wet." For the space of three hours, whilst driving over a country as open and wild as any to be found between John O'Groat's house and the Land's End, a lowering sky with no hopeful rift in it had been pouring on me without remorse; so that I drew up at the "Nag's Head," the principal inn of a small town on the borders of Dartmoor, and terminated a stage of my journey with no little satisfaction.

"Rough day, sir," said mine host, as he assisted in removing my drenched overcoat; "and little hope of its clearing."

"Rough enough, Johnson," I replied. "You've had a little fine weather I expect, and the Atlantic is making up for lost time by a special soaking. But do you ever have fine weather hereabouts, Johnson? Wasn't it Charles II who said, taught by his experiences not far from this, that however fine it might be elsewhere, he was sure it must be raining at Tavistock?"

"That gentleman," mine host replied, "is reported to have said a great many things which had better have remained unsaid;" and then he added, with a twinkle in his eye—for Johnson, besides being a well-informed man, was shrewd and humorous—"you know, sir, too much familiarity breeds contempt, though there are a great many exceptions to that rule. But, then, if we are familiar with watery skies, we are equally so with rich pastures and matchless mountain streams, and rivers that may vie for life and beauty with any the wide world over. Besides, as Mrs. Bray says, we are taught to know the value of a good thing when we have it—a virtue getting somewhat scarce in these times; for a real, fine, dry, sunshiny day can never pass unnoticed here, and all living things rejoice in it. The clouds, the damp, and the rain are all forgotten in the gladness of the genial hour."

"A very proper view of the case, Johnson," I said; "for if there is a bright side to things, and there generally is, we ought to look at it; and now"—this was spoken to the waiting-maid whom the mistress had sent for orders—"be good enough to light the candles, and let me have tea at once, for I must do another stage to-night, let the weather be what it may."

The girl hesitated, as though, in one of the very homes of the good old Saxon tongue, she was waiting for an interpreter. But no; in a respectful tone, and evidently intent on doing me a service, she said, "The waters be out, sir. If you had comed the other way, you cou'dn't 'a passed."

"Thank you, Mary," I replied, "but never mind the waters. Be as quick as you can with the rashers and the cream, there's a good maid."

I had picked up this latter civility in my Devonshire journeys, having had occasion to notice its potency. Indeed, it is always a matter of principle with me to speak civilly, and courteously too, to all the multifarious grades of servitors I happen to meet with. The distinctions of life can be sufficiently observed, and self-respect be creditably maintained, without the assumptions and style of address that are frequently indulged in, and which, though they may induce an air of servility, are sure to provoke a spirit of angry contempt. It is a matter of duty that we should show some consideration for our fellow-creatures, whatever their standing in society may be, and we shall scarcely fail in this way to touch those hidden springs of right feeling and character, which otherwise might corrode and be powerless for good.

The traveller's room became speedily refulgent with the light of two well-favoured moulds, and redolent with the odour of savoury accompaniments to the most refreshing of beverages; and I was fast forgetting past discomforts, without troubling myself with the probability of coming ones, when Johnson again entered, and said, "It's quite impossible for you to go another stage to-night, sir. The waters have risen to a dangerous height, and are rising still."

"Dangerous, Johnson?"

"You would say so, sir, if you saw the Cranlane water just now. Though it's only a small rivulet most times, yet, when suddenly swelled by the torrents that rush down from the moor in weather like this, it becomes an angry river that sweeps everything before it, tossing and roaring like the sea in a heavy gale. It begins to be dangerous when the foot-bridge is covered; and woe betide the adventurer who attempts to pass through after that! Many a bemuddled farmer, riding home from market, has been drowned in one or other of these swollen land streams, and stirring stories are told in connection with such floods, which are common enough at this season."

"Then what am I to do, Johnson, if I cannot proceed?"

"Make yourself as comfortable as possible, sir. I shall be happy to place a few books at your service, which I look into occasionally myself, and keep for dull days."

"Or for dull visitors; which, Johnson? But really you must furnish me with something more to my mind than book company. Let me have your own company for an hour or two. My ride across the down has made me quite *wisht* as you say, and I could no more stand the howling of the wind and the pattering of the rain than I could pay a midnight visit to the tor, where it is said——"

"I know what you are going to remark, sir," answered Johnson, as a superstitious expression stole out on his features, "and shall be happy to relieve your loneliness a little; but I am no great talker, sir."

Now Johnson was a remarkable talker. He possessed that enviable gift of utterance, which always fills me with admiration even in the most uneducated, as I am slow of speech myself. His ideas clothed themselves in words as soon as they were born, and marched forth with musical strains like a regimental band. There was no hesitation, no hum'ing and haw'ing, no tripping and recalling, but on and on he went with the greatest ease, using no effort, and apparently without taking breath.

I suppose it's all to be accounted for by his full eye and large mouth; but however that may be, he was always equal to an incessant stream of news, traditions, and sentiment, and never seemed to be incommoded by parenthesis, however long, or by interrogations, which he answered himself, or by appeals to one's understanding and knowledge, which he made with uncommon frequency. Nor did a change of subject interrupt the verbal current in the least; and when he was fairly going, I could only think of him as a talking machine. And yet he invariably started with the remark, "You know, sir, I am not much of a talker," which resulted most probably from a habit he had acquired, unless it arose from a praiseworthy sense of humility; though, I think, for it is the case with humility sometimes, that it must have slightly praised itself.

Mine host was unable to give me his company so soon as I wished, and I busied myself in looking through a few of the books with which he was kind enough to supply me. In one of them I found a manuscript in Johnson's handwriting; and perceiving at a glance that it dealt with no private matters, but contained the record of a historical tradition, I took the liberty of perusing it. It was as follows:—

Hard by the birthplace of Bishop Jewel, whose celebrated "Apology" was commanded by Queen Elizabeth to be chained up for readers in every church in the kingdom, lies a lovely valley, scarce equalled for picturesque beauty in North Devon, whose dells and glens have charms peculiar to themselves. Formed by a deep dip of hilly land, it reposes between well-wooded slopes, thick set with rustling hollies and glittering ferns, and is graced by a noisy stream which trips on to the strand at Hele. It may be called the valley of Chambercombe, from the name borne by an antiquated farmhouse which nestles in its calm and shady bosom, and is a special object of interest to the lovers of the marvellous. For in the roof of that ancient domicile a long low chamber is shown, which figures in a tragical story, declared to be undoubtedly true.

It appears that about the middle of the last century there lived at Chambercombe a well-to-do farmer, whose estate of a hundred acres made him, in those days and in those parts,* a sort of agricultural nabob. It was his wont in the cool of the summer's evening to air himself beneath the inviting shade of a beech-tree, encircled by a rustic seat, which stood in the garden fronting his house. There he sat, and smoked his pipe, and indulged in dreamy reflections, lulled by the murmuring of the streamlet just at hand, and by the monotony of the ground-swell on the shore at a distance. And there, wrapped in reverie one fine afternoon about "drinking time," he was proceeding with his ruminations, and well-nigh betrayed into a doze, when memory came to the rescue, effectually rousing him by the reminder that he had neglected to look after some needful repairs in the roof of the house, which his wife had specially commended to his attention when she left in the morning for Coombe market. The apprehension of censure, more than the consciousness of neglect, brought him back in a moment from the land of dreams to the region of duty, and, filling his pipe afresh, he commenced a series of cogitations on what it behoved him to do.

The thatch had been disturbed by the wind, just over his wife's store-room, and he saw at a glance that the readiest road to the damaged part would be through the passage window. There could scarcely be a second opinion on that point; but, whilst certifying himself, his attention was attracted to a casement he had never before noticed. Laying down his pipe, he began to reason. There are three rooms and a passage up-stairs, with a window in each. That makes four windows; but as sure as the day there are five—yes, five! He counted them again and again. He reckoned them over and over. And having satisfied himself that there *were* five casements, and not four, he was strongly incited to seek for an explanation.

Proceeding to the house, he ascended the stairs, and paused at the top to recollect himself. "It's the casement next to the dame's store-room window that puzzles me," he said to himself; and, as a window means a chamber, there *must* be a chamber of some sort beyond. Providing himself, therefore, with a pick-axe, he effected a breach in the far wall of the store-room, sufficiently large to admit of an entrance, and peered through the opening with no little curiosity.

But by this time his wife had returned, and was greatly indignant at the liberties he was taking with the old house. She followed her husband, however, through the gap, which introduced them at once into a low room hung with moth-eaten mouldering tapestry, which exhaled a moist, rank odour of forgotten years. In the rattling casement, and round the carved-work of the oaken cornice, were black festoons of ancient cobwebs, and the table, the wardrobe, and the curiously wrought chairs, that once were much-prized furniture, were dust-covered and worm-eaten. The white ashes of a wood fire lay on a cracked hearth-stone; and a bed, around which embroidered hangings that rustled in the fresh air were closely drawn, stood with its head against the side wall.

"Draw the curtains," whispered the wife under her breath, motioning to her husband. And in the dim half-light, for evening was closing in rapidly, they saw a convincing token that no common mystery was associated with that concealed chamber, which had, in fact, been converted into a tomb.

* Johnson in his narrative had evidently taken advantage of Mr. Tugwell's "North Devon."

They looked at each other in mute astonishment, and, penetrated with a superstitious awe, hastened back to the store-room, where a long consultation was held. And then, for reasons which have not transpired, the old man walled up the chamber once more, and finding a habitation elsewhere, the house was let to others, who, perhaps, were not sufficiently observant to be troubled with the difficulty of accounting for five windows when there ought only to be four.

I had scarcely finished the perusal of this story when Johnson entered, and, seeing the manuscript in my hand, he inquired whether I had been interested.

"Certainly," I said; "but is the story true?"

"True enough, sir," he replied; "and, as the waters will scarcely be passable to-morrow, I will put some papers into your hands that will explain the discovery which startled the farmer and his wife. They were written by a trembling hand, but were perfectly legible, and must have been penned a century and a half ago at least. I shall tell you, when you have perused them, how they came into my possession, and all I know of the last days of the writer."

"I thank you, Johnson, but as I hope, despite your augury, to proceed on my journey to-morrow, I should prefer reading the papers to-night."

He brought them immediately, and, having trimmed the candles and stirred the fire, I read the following narrative:—

I.

One boisterous evening in 1663, when autumn was merging into winter, there sat by a goodly fire, which blazed in the hall of a respectable farmhouse, a staid-looking woman busy with the spinning-wheel, and a hale stripling of some seventeen summers, whose countenance was radiant with intelligence, and whose well-knit form gave promise of a lusty manhood. For several days the wind had blown with a violence approaching to a heavy gale, and now it was hourly increasing, howling ominously amongst the trees that formed a shelter to the west, and making the old house tremble and shrink, as though, substantial as it was, it could do no other than collapse in such a furious blast. The youth, who sat watching the burning boughs which cracked and frothed with sap in the glowing fire, sending forth that woody fragrance which is so delightful, made frequent comments on the force of the rising storm, and, naturally enough, referred to the dangers of the seas when such a tempest is raging.

"In troth, William," said the housekeeper, "we may well feel for the poor fellows who have their home on the ocean a night like this; yet we should not forget what we read but yesterday, that there is the same providential oversight and agency everywhere, as present and active when the wings of the wind flap the sea into billows as when they wave gently over corn-fields that nod to the breeze."

"I shouldn't wonder," replied the youth, who had no mind to take up such a course of reflection as that, "if there's a wreck about here by the morning. I saw a vessel just before dark standing up channel that looked as if she'd have a hard time of it. I'm much mistaken if she wasn't fast settling towards the land."

"I hope not, William," said the housekeeper, gravely. "It's now four years ago, in just such weather as this, that the last wreck happened between Hele and Rillage, and there are those, I know, who have never been the same men since. Strange doings were whispered about, and I saw and heard enough myself to assure me that there had been foul play somewhere. There are people, William, who are utterly indifferent about the miseries

they occasion, provided they can gratify their thirst for gain."

"I don't quite understand you," the youth rejoined; but he was prevented from proceeding by the entrance of his father, a fine, tall, powerful man, dressed in the fashion of a gentleman-farmer, who stepped hastily into the hall and said, "Let me have the large lantern, Rebecca."

"Is there anything the matter?" inquired the housekeeper, stopping her wheel, and rising from her seat.

"Matter?" he replied angrily, "why do you ask such a question? But your first words are generally a foil to your first thoughts, and we shall have the benefit of them hereafter, I suppose."

"It struck me, Mr. Oatway"—she always addressed him in that way when she was annoyed, or about to be very candid and outspoken—"that the wind had done some damage, perhaps, or that the sick beast was not doing so well. It may be, however, that you are going once more to try your strength against an old foe, whose grip may be one day fatal."

"I shall find a way, Rebecca," he answered in a defiant tone, "to make you hold your tongue, if neither your sense nor what you call your religion is sufficient for that purpose. You think yourself licensed to cross me on all occasions, and take liberties with your speech, not very complimentary to your character. Is it any business of yours where I am going, or what I am going to do? Get me the lantern."

"A Creber's shadow about the place, Mr. Oatway, can never be a token for good," replied the housekeeper, calmly. "You were asked for an hour ago."

"There are worse men than Creber," he replied in a tone of felt rebuke, though chafing with vexation, "whose shadows might please you better. Let me advise you to keep the little sense you have for more needy occasions, and to practise the maxim you lay such stress on, that 'Every one should mind his own business.'"

"Your sarcasm does not offend me," she answered, "but perhaps you will allow that the maxim is by no means unheeded when I remind you that there was once a voice which said to me faintly, 'Rebecca, speak a faithful word in a kind way now and then; there are times of remorse, remember, when the controlling power of affection *is* felt.' Would you wish me to disobey that voice?"

This reference to the dying request of his wife silenced him, and he stood in the midst of the hall swayed by contending emotions, whilst the housekeeper went on to say, "We have all a battle to fight, Mr. Oatway, and it must be fought in our own hearts. The first blow makes the strife, it is said, and, I will venture to add, the first blow often settles it."

He remained for awhile irresolute, and then remarked, in a subdued tone, and with an uneasy manner, "I have promised to meet some of the Hele men, Rebecca, and I must keep my word. Reach me the lantern."

Whilst complying with his wishes, she observed, "It is no easy thing, Mr. Oatway, to maintain a higher standard than our associates acknowledge. Do sit down, sir, and stay with us, for the gale is increasing."

He took the lantern, however, and left the house.

"Well!" said the youth, his face flushed, and his manner betokening both surprise and displeasure, "I never heard you speak to my father in that way before, Rebecca, and I don't see any reason for it now. Was it my mother who told you to say a word now and then?"

"Your mother, William."

"I wish I had a mother," he replied, sorrowfully, gathering with his foot the ashes that had scattered on the hearth. "But you might as well have got the lantern at once, Rebecca; why not?"

The housekeeper, in her anxiety to be of service to the father, had forgotten for the moment the presence of the son, and having committed herself against her will, she hesitated to afford an explanation. A feeling of regret rose strongly in her mind lest she might unwittingly have lessened the youth's filial respect; or, what was still more probable, as he inherited the self-will and determination of his parent, lest she might have drawn those feelings into action which would lead him to espouse his father's cause, whatever it was, and to join him in a purpose which her words had sufficiently shown she both suspected and condemned. The delicacy and difficulty of the case affected her; but she was a woman of a strong mind, and had been accustomed to act in trying emergencies.

"I cannot answer your question just now, William," she said, "but I will do so ere long. It must satisfy you for the present to be told that I was anxious to prevent your father from going with the Hele men such a night as this. They have no doubt observed the vessel you spoke of, and will make for the shore to see if anything can be done."

"And why shouldn't father go with them?" he asked smartly. "He is able to take care of himself anywhere and in any weather. Men arn't frightened, Rebecca, at a gust of wind, or a sweeping sea; and if good can be done, I wonder you should wish to hinder it."

She felt relieved by the view of the case which the youth had taken, but it gave rise to another difficulty, less perplexing, indeed, but the occasion of concern; for he immediately added, "I should like to join them, Rebecca, and learn to be brave. Father laughs at me, and says I've no spirit. He told me only to-day that you had coddled me up till I was fit for nothing but to turn your spinning-wheel and gather limpets. But I know better. I feel strong and bold enough, and I want to do something. Why shouldn't I be like other lads of my age, and show myself a man?"

"A *man*, William? Boys don't grow into men all at once, and the spirit and doings that young people call manly are generally of such a character as to make them anything but men. I should be sorry for you to learn manliness in such schools as the Crebers, and Fosdicks, and Vanstones have been tutored in. First, get manly thoughts and principles, William, and then you will be a man in the true sense of the word."

The youth was silent; but a fire had kindled in his bosom which her remarks did not extinguish, and he determined to have a way of his own.

Taking advantage of his silence, the housekeeper proceeded to say, "Your father would be angry, exceedingly angry, if you attempted to follow him, William. Hear how the wind howls; and for hours the sea has been moaning, as though it felt for and bewailed the miseries of those exposed to its fury. You could do no good without, and you have a bright fire and a heart that loves you within. Remain where you are, and I will read to you some counsels that are better than my own."

The lad's self-will had been excited, however, and withal a spirit of curiosity was stirring within him, so that, having busied himself awhile with adjusting and readjusting the furze and stalks that blazed on the hearth, he suddenly rose from his seat, threw a leather cape around his shoulders, and left the house.

He was arrested, and almost brought to repentance by the darkness of the night and the fierceness of the

gale, but as objects became gradually more distinct, and the hum of voices proceeding from the barn caught his attention, he crossed the yard, and crept quietly into the loft of a linhay that overlooked the place where his father and seven men were seated on bundles of reed. One of them held a lighted lantern on his knee, so that the forms of the party could be dimly distinguished; and, as they took no pains to moderate their voices, the listener heard everything that passed.

MEN I HAVE KNOWN.

JOHN GALT.

It has been a very customary theme to lament the fate of the actor, who, however richly gifted or widely popular, is doomed to pass away from the stage of life, leaving only a vague tradition and a shadowy name behind. The same fate, however, awaits the popular author, even though he has been able to bequeath enduring proofs of his talents to posterity. With but a few exceptions of world-wide renown, the most successful authors achieve a fame hardly less ephemeral than the actors who are forgotten with the fall of the curtain and the extinction of the lights. The similitude is mortifying, but true. The Dickenses and Thackerays of our day must submit to the doom of oblivion, and leave but a name, like the Richardsons and Fieldings of a past generation. New literary idols rise up to be the admiration and wonder of the multitude during their little hour. *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

I was thrown into this train of thought by seeing in the newspapers the name of Galt as one of the leading commissioners sent from Canada to our Government to negotiate and determine the great colonial confederation question. This, I said, must be the son of my old and estimable friend John Galt, the author of the "Ayrshire Legatees," the "Annals of the Parish," and a whole host of other productions of striking character and merit. Why, even amid the pother of periodical, and turmoil of railroad literature, should the exceedingly clever volumes of Galt be so unaccountably neglected, and his very name sound like that of a stranger in the reading world? Local scenes and the portraiture of oddities, and also the use of the Scotch vernacular, may have had some effect; but what were and are wonderful attractions in Scott can never be deemed blemishes sufficient to blot out the racy humour in the life-pictures of his compatriot. Some of these scenes are worthy of standing by the side of a Wilkie or a Faed, so true are they to provincial peculiarities, and so faithful to national character.

But John Galt, fertile in authorship as he was, was not a mere author, whose outline of life could be traced in his writings. He was a man of great activity of mind, extensive travel, and prolific enterprise. On the Continent he saw much, and mixed in intercourse with the set of which Lord Byron was the Corypheus, and told us some particulars of their doings. But America was the grand field for his exertion. His splendid project for the allocation of lands and improvement of Upper Canada evinced the sagacity and comprehensiveness of a constructive and legislative faculty which is rarely met with even among the ablest and most experienced statesmen. The plans were adopted by powerful moneyed interests at home, and the originator was deputed to proceed to the colony and superintend the carrying of his imperial design into effect. How seldom does the sower reap the harvest of inventions or far-sighted measures which enrich the world and tend to promote the welfare of mankind! Galt was no exception to the too common rule. A cabal was formed against him, and, while he was devotedly engaged in shaping these enormous territories into manageable community and order, a sordid conspiracy drove him from his arduous post, and returned him home an impoverished adventurer! He had made his own masters, and, like most others in similar circumstances, he met with his reward in ingratitude and wrong, probably with the addition of censure! But there lies the wide district, the province, or the territory of Galt; a country taken from the wilderness, perhaps to be the seat of empire within the period of human beings now alive; at all events, it may perpetuate the name of one to whom North America in less prosperous or promising days owed much.

Galt, with all his energy, came home utterly disappointed and almost broken-hearted. He struggled with his hard fate, and bore it manfully. It was a grievous sight to see the originator of so great a national undertaking in a condition to be arrested for a school bill. This happened to Galt, and from a quarter which could hardly be supposed capable of the act. I was on intimate relations with both parties, and had a painful quarrel on this occasion; but it terminated amicably: the arrest was partly explained away and cancelled. A disavowal mitigated the reproach, and all matters were reconciled more harmoniously than could have been anticipated when the mine exploded. The law has been abrogated since those days, when any one indebted for a few pounds was liable to be taken without warning, if caprice, anger, or cupidity prompted the act, and the prisons and sponging-houses were perpetually crowded by debtors getting through with their scath and scorn, or probably discredited and ruined by the exposure.

But the too common literary destiny of fame without material reward partially pursued him to the last, 1839, his sixtieth year, when, worn out, the strong man yielded his willing spirit to the Almighty Power that gave it. His was no ordinary mind, and it was lodged in a physical frame of commanding proportions. He was above six feet two inches in height, and lithe and muscular in action. The use of spectacles betrayed one imperfection: tall as he was, he could not see far; and perhaps a similar deficiency of vision prevented his looking clearly enough into the designs of those with whom he became connected in his great Canadian concern. His idiosyncrasy, however, offered a still greater problem for study. Galt was wise as a sage, and simple as a child: he was equally shrewd and credulous. He was as eminently practical as he was fancifully imaginative. His sound, every-day, common sense was so variegated with a mystic element that, upon the whole, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to pronounce whether he had been born to be a plodder or a poet. And this abstract view may explain in some measure how the same author could produce the accurate descriptions of Scottish low and middle life, overflowing with a peculiar quaint and telling humour, and many of the other works which prove the large accompaniment of fine taste, poetic feeling, and a capacity to adorn nearly every branch of sterling literature.

Only a few years before his death he published a very small volume of poems, involving an appeal to the kindly and considerate feeling of the public towards a man bowed down by ill-health and harassed by wasting cares, in spite of a constant, industrious, and honourable career, which ought never to have terminated in that deplorable condition. When, in "reverie"—

"One by one the lights were quenched,
And ancient night was come;
Lone silence settled over all,
And sound itself grew dumb.

"The glimmering phantoms of the past
Seemed things that were to be;
But, like the stars, my thoughts went out,
And light was gloom to me.

"The steadfast earth beneath my tread
Dissolving——"

It was hoped at the time I have alluded to that a collected edition, or rather a selection from the writer's voluminous and very miscellaneous works, might be profitably brought out; but the proposition fell to the ground: it was about the time of the Reform agitation, and not favourable to literary projects. But I feel assured that, if renewed and judiciously carried into execution, the plan might now be adopted with sufficient advantage to the publisher, and gratification to every class of readers. There are in all, as far as I can remember, above sixty works to choose from (several in three volumes), ranging from the epic, through history, drama—farcical, comic, and tragic—biography (such as the "Life of West"), novel, travel, and pamphlet; much, indeed, better forgotten, but also much which should not be let die. His autobiography might pioneer the way; and Galt, like his national contemporaries Wilson, Lockhart, and others, renew his term to entertain and delight the public.

The editorship of "The Courier" for a short period furnished uncongenial employment for his talents, and a trammelled toil unsuited to his taste and habits. But his later years in London, before he retired to court the peaceful termination of his business struggles and literary labours in his native land, were years of sore affliction, which he bore with manly firmness and most exemplary patience. For a while he occupied a pretty little cottage at old Brompton, all the vestiges of which and its rural surroundings are now utterly obliterated by a city of streets, squares, and crescents, as well as the vacant site and remains of the ephemeral National Exhibition Palace; there I often saw him and grieved at his unfortunate condition. He had been struck with paralysis, and I have never witnessed nor heard of any human being surviving so many severe and quickly-repeated shocks. I believe his vigorous constitution withstood more than ten or eleven attacks, which, sadly as they shattered his bodily strength, seemed to waste their violence in vain upon his philosophic mind. During the intervals he was calm, and resigned himself with Christian humility to his melancholy lot. Even then, as at all times, he displayed wonderful equanimity of temper. He ceased not to be the same John Galt he had always been. Characteristically Scotch in speech and manners, his Doric accents appeared, from their simplicity, to stamp his instructive observations upon men and things, gathered from many and various sources, with additional effect. His conversation was always exceedingly pleasing, and chiefly raised above the familiar tone by a keen relish for humour, whether encountered or dispensed. To have done and experienced so much throughout an active, hard-working life of nearly forty years, it was charming to meet with a man so entirely modest, unaffected, and not in the least opinionated. To boast and complaint he was equally a stranger; and I remember none, in the rather wide circle that knew Galt, who did not regard him with admiration as an author and cordial esteem as a man. The attachment of his friends was warmer; and well did he deserve the consideration in which he was held by critical judgment as respected his writings, and the personal attachment which sprang from all his social relations. Richly gifted by nature, honest, diligent, and persevering, a course of worldly success and prosperity might have been expected. It was ordered otherwise; and, though his life was in many ways one of honour and usefulness, it is with a feeling of regretful sadness that I review the career and destiny of the ill-requited and defeated John Galt.

HINTS ON LEGAL TOPICS.

XVI.—MASTER AND SERVANT (*continued*).

THE next important principle to be borne in mind in hiring servants (not being domestic servants) is this, that where *no time is mentioned*, either expressly or impliedly, for the duration of the contract, the hiring is a *general hiring*, which means, in point of law, *a hiring for a year, or a yearly hiring*. This is the rule, which is nevertheless subject to exceptions in parts of the country, or in trades or professions where particular usages prevail.

Towards the latter end of the year 1842 a publisher named Nurse engaged a Mr. Baxter to act as editor of a new periodical publication called "The Illustrated Polytechnic Review." The terms of the engagement were not proved; but it was shown that, after the commencement of the publication, Mr. Nurse had paid Mr. Baxter three guineas a week salary. It was also shown that Mr. Baxter had, *with the knowledge of Nurse*, engaged a scientific contributor *for a twelvemonth*. The first number came out in January 1843; then it seems Mr. Nurse complained to Mr. Baxter of the manner in which it was brought out, and said, if it were not conducted better, he should discontinue it. After the third number Mr. Nurse abandoned the publication, which was continued by another publisher. Mr. Baxter brought an action against Mr. Nurse for dismissing him before the termination of a year, and called several witnesses connected with periodical works to prove that, *in the absence of special stipulation*, a general engagement as an editor of such a work is understood to be an engagement by the year; but, upon cross-examination, they admitted that they spoke with reference to *established* works, and not to *new speculations*. Mr. Nurse paid £50 into court, and pleaded that he was justified in dismissing Mr. Baxter on the ground of his misconduct as editor. The jury found a verdict for the publisher; and Chief Justice Tindal said that the rule about contracts of this kind was by no means inflexible that they are always to be for a year; and it by no means followed that the jury ought to have been directed to find, as a matter of law, that there was a yearly engagement. He thought the question had been very properly left to be decided on the facts by the jury, who considered that the evidence showed that the general rule as to the engagements of editors being yearly did not apply to the editorship of new publications.

In the case of labouring or farm-servants, it is well established that, if no time be fixed, or can be implied for the duration of the hiring, the engagement is for a year; and the importance of the question whether a "hiring for a year" has really been established or not, in the case of labourers and farm-servants, formerly lay in this, that such a hiring used to give these servants a settlement in the parish where they were so hired; but, now that occupation alone confers a right to be chargeable on the poor-rate, the cases in which this question occurs are less seldom brought into courts of justice. Still the matter is one of no trifling moment, considered with a view to the right of putting an end to the hiring, as will be seen presently.

Thus it has repeatedly been held, and is undoubtedly now the law, that if the parties agree to *except* any portion of the year, however short, during which the servant

is not under his master's control, the hiring cannot be considered a hiring for a year. Thus where a man was hired for a year, but with leave to work for some one else during the harvest month, or to be absent eleven days during sheep-shearing—where a bricklayer hired himself for three years, but he was to work only during certain hours each day, and in case of frost to have no wages, with liberty to serve another master—in either case the man was not a yearly servant.

In those cases, where the *only* circumstance from which the duration of the contract of hiring can be inferred is that wages are agreed to be paid *weekly*, it is always considered that there is *a weekly hiring*.

The importance of the distinction now mainly lies in this, that where the hiring is yearly *it cannot, in general, be put an end to by either party before the end of the year*. So that if the master wrongfully dismisses his servant (not being a domestic servant) before the year is out, the servant may maintain an action for wrongful dismissal; and a jury would, in some cases, be justified in assessing his damages at the amount of wages which he would have earned had he been allowed to serve till the end of the year; whilst, on the other hand, a yearly servant wrongfully quitting his master's service during the year cannot recover any wages for the portion of the twelvemonth during which he has served.

On the 1st of March, 1793, an army agent named Collyer retained a man named Beeston in his service as a clerk, at a certain salary. It was agreed that the hiring was to be "for one whole year from the day above mentioned, and afterwards as long as the parties should respectively please, until the expiration of the current year from the said 1st March." Beeston stayed till the 23rd of December, 1826, and was willing to stay longer; but on that day Mr. Collyer discharged him. Beeston thereupon brought an action, and it was proved at the trial that in 1811 the salary, amounting to £125, was paid quarterly; but for six years prior to 1826 it was paid monthly. Chief Justice Best (afterwards Lord Wynford) told the jury that the payment of salary quarterly was evidence of a yearly hiring, though the salary was afterwards paid monthly. He further said, the general rule was, that if a servant were hired, he was to be deemed hired for a year, although the case of domestic servants was different. The jury found for the plaintiff, Beeston, a sum of £83, equal to his wages until the 1st of March, 1827; and the Court of Common Pleas held that the ruling of the learned Chief Justice was correct.

Again, where a man named Fawcett entered as warehouseman into the service of a Mr. Cash, who signed the following paper: "William Cash engages to pay Thomas Fawcett £12 10*s*. per month for the first year, and advance £10 per annum until the salary is £180, from the 5th of March, 1832,"—this was held to be a contract on Mr. Cash's part to employ Fawcett for one whole year; and upon Mr. Cash dismissing Fawcett on the 28th of January, 1833, the man was held entitled to £25 in respect of his wages from the 5th of January (the day when they were last paid) to the 5th March, which was *the end of the year of service*.

The following, on the other hand, are instances of breach of contract on the part of *the servant*:—

One Spain was a yearly servant to a farmer named Arnott. Spain usually breakfasted at five o'clock in the morning, and dined at two. One day his master ordered him to go with the horses to the marsh, which was a mile off, before dinner, dinner being then ready. Spain said he had done his due, and would not go till he had had his dinner; Mr. Arnott told him to go about his business, and the man went accordingly, without offering any submission to his master's orders. The servant brought an action for his wages from Michaelmas to July; but Lord Ellenborough said that if the contract were for a year's service, the year must be completed before the servant is entitled to be paid.

Messrs. Robinson were silk-manufacturers in London. A man named Turner acted as their foreman from January to June 1831. The agreement was that Turner was to have wages at the rate of £80 a year. In June 1831 he was dismissed by his employers for having advised and assisted their apprentice to quit their service and go to America; and for that Messrs. Robinson had brought an action and recovered forty shillings damages. The Lord Chief Justice Denman thought there was nothing in the case to repel the ordinary presumption of a yearly hiring; and, as the complainant Turner had been rightfully discharged from his employers' service for misconduct during the year, he had forfeited the whole of his wages for the part of the year during which he had served.

In another instance a person named Ridgway was, on the 10th of June, 1830, appointed by the Hungerford Market Company clerk of the company at a salary of £200 per annum; and it appeared that he was paid quarterly. The directors, being determined to dismiss Ridgway, came to a resolution, which was entered by him in the minute-book on the 11th of April, 1833, to call a court of directors for the 17th to elect his successor. They directed him to summon the directors accordingly, which he did, but subjoined to the entry of the resolution in the book *a protest in his own handwriting against the proceeding*. For this a jury found that he was rightfully dismissed; and then came the question of the amount of salary to which he was entitled. It was held that he could not recover any part of the salary from the last pay-day at the time of his dismissal.

But not only will an express stipulation in the agreement, custom also will do away altogether with the effect of the above rule of law.

And here we come to the main exception, which has been already more than once mentioned, and is most important to be borne in mind.

With respect to *domestic servants*, there is a well-known rule, founded entirely on custom, that their contract of service with their master or mistress *may be put an end to at any time by giving a month's warning or paying a month's wages*. This rule is so familiar to us all, and is so universally acted upon, as to need no illustration. But disputes often arise, not very easy to settle, as to what are domestic servants, and what not. A few instances may suffice.

A man named Nowlan entered the service of a gentleman of the name of Ablett as head gardener, having the management and superintendence of the hot-house, vineries, etc. When the engagement was entered into, Mr. Ablett, who lived somewhere in the neighbourhood of Denbigh, said to Nowlan, "What wages am I to give you?" to which he replied, "I shall not come from Kew without £100." Nowlan went, and lived in a house in Mr. Ablett's grounds about two hundred yards from the mansion. He was held to be a menial* servant, and liable to be dismissed at a month's warning.

A farm-bailiff, on the other hand, has been held *not to be* a menial servant, and *not* dismissible with a month's wages, or at a month's notice.

* The old derivation of "menial" was from *intra mœnia*, within the walls; but this is now given up, and the word is supposed to be connected with "many" and "*ménage*." So that a menial servant means a retainer, one of a man's retinue.

It has been decided by the Court of Exchequer that a governess, engaged at £60 a year, with board and lodging, does *not* fall within the rule by which a menial or domestic servant may be discharged at a month's notice or with a month's wages. And the same rule will apply to a tutor. But, in all engagements of this nature, it is highly desirable that a distinct arrangement should be made beforehand.

In April 1863 a man named Nicoll entered into the service of Mr. Greaves, the master of the old Berkshire hounds, as huntsman. On the 16th of October Mr. Greaves gave him notice to quit on the 16th of November following. Nicoll thereupon sued Mr. Greaves for wrongfully dismissing him, and contended that a huntsman was not a menial servant; also that, according to custom, huntsmen were not liable to be dismissed before the end of the year. Mr. Greaves, on the other hand, contended that a huntsman *was* a menial servant, and that it *was* the custom to dismiss them at a month's notice. The judge told the jury that the first was a question of law (which was reserved), and the second was a question of fact, and within their province. They found that if any custom was proved at all, it was that huntsmen were engaged *for the season.* They found for Nicoll, damages £80. The Court of Common Pleas held that Mr. Greaves was right. A huntsman *is* a menial servant, dismissible at one month's notice or wages. Mr. Justice Erle said, "The advantages of the law are mutual; a master may be relieved from the perpetual irritation caused by the constant presence of a servant in the course of personal services, and a well-conditioned servant may be relieved from the tyranny of an exacting master. It seems to me that a huntsman would frequently come into communication with the master of the hounds; and if the latter is thwarted in the enjoyment of what is intended for his amusement, it may be made by the huntsman a source of irritation instead of enjoyment. So the master of the hounds may be rough and violent to people dependent upon him, so as to make it better for the huntsman that he should be able to say, 'This is treatment which I cannot put up with, and I will not remain in your service.' For these reasons I think that a huntsman *does* come within the class of domestic or menial servants."

It is very common in cases of non-domestic servants to set up the existence of a *custom* in the particular trade or occupation in which the servant is employed. In the case of a commercial traveller with £150 a year, it was shown to be the usage for the master to dismiss the servant upon giving three months' notice. In the woollen trade it has been proved by evidence to be the custom to dismiss at one month's notice. The case of a newspaper was discussed in the Queen's Bench in the year 1856, and it was then shown to be usual, when there was no condition expressed in the agreement of hiring, to give a printer one month's, or at least a fortnight's notice, a publisher three months' notice, and a sub-editor notice to the end of the current year.

On the 25th of March, 1851, a Mr. Ryan was appointed master of a school at Whittington, endowed for the education of parish children. Amongst the terms of the agreement were these:—"The trustees shall pay you at the rate of £55 per annum, and no more, so long as, by mutual consent, you shall retain the office of master; the appointment to be subject to termination by three months' notice by either party." Mr. Ryan was dismissed on the ground that "he had declined to attend to the wishes of the trustees to execute the pupil teachers' indentures of apprenticeship, and to teach the Church Catechism under the rules and regulations of the trustees." This was on the 1st of March, 1854; Mr. Ryan contended that he could only be dismissed at the end of a year beginning with Lady-day, and remained in office till March 1855. But Mr. Justice Coleridge said, "With regard to a school, it might be of great importance that a master who had done some act not sufficient to justify immediate expulsion should not be allowed to continue in his office until the expiration of the current year. It seems, therefore, to me that the trustees are justified in giving a three months' notice to terminate the schoolmaster's holding *at any time during the year.*"

YUEN-MING-YUEN.

During the war in China in 1860, when the allied forces of England and France marched up to the gates of Peking, and drove the Emperor from his capital to take refuge in the fastnesses of the Tartarian Alps, the name of Yuen-ming-yuen was frequently mentioned as the "Summer Palace" of the Chinese monarchs. This is a mistake, for it is the autumnal retreat of these luxurious despots after the violent heat of summer has passed away; during which season the Emperor and his court are at Zehol or Jehol in Manchoo Tartary, where the true summer palace stands in the midst of beautiful gardens at an elevation of many thousand feet above the level of the sea, with a comparatively cool climate. "Yuen" is the Chinese for a garden; so that the above title, when fully translated, signifies the "garden of gardens," where the imperial gardeners in former times expended their greatest skill in laying out the grounds, after the peculiar style of landscape-gardening adopted in China.

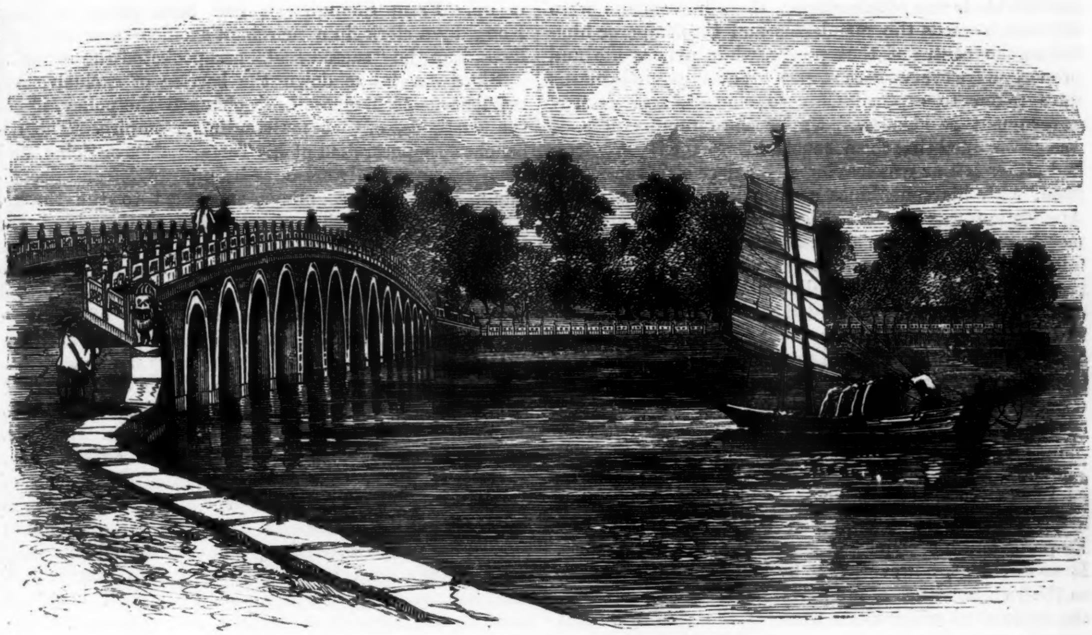
These celebrated gardens are situated to the north-west of Peking, at a distance of about nine miles from the west gate of the city. The enclosed area of the grounds covers about 60,000 acres, but not more than one-tenth of this space is planted with trees, shrubs, or flowers; the remainder lying waste in some places, like the heath adjoining the grounds about Windsor Castle, or the woodlands around that noble residence of England's sovereigns. The gardens proper may be compared to Kew Gardens, with a large portion divided into hill and dale, wood and lawn, like Richmond Park, but intersected in every possible way by canals and lakes, branching off from a tributary of the Peiho river which runs through the grounds. Some idea of the scenery on this stream may be gathered from the annexed engraving from a photograph, showing the very handsome bridge, with fifteen arches, that spans it at the point leading to the imperial Hall of Audience. With a very small stretch of imagination, the reader could suppose it to be a scene on the Thames, near Richmond. The bridge is a substantial stone structure, and a characteristic example of that class of Chinese architecture.

While there is a similarity between the general character of the landscape on that part of the stream which flows past the Chinese capital, and what we have compared it with on the banks of our own river above the English metropolis, still there is a great difference in the style in which the grounds are laid out. "Although artificial, they are neither trimmed, nor shorn, nor sloped, like the glacis of a fortification, but have been thrown up with immense labour in an irregular, and, as it were, fortuitous manner, so as to represent the free hand of nature. Bold rocky promontories are seen jutting into a lake, and valleys retiring, some choked with wood, others in a state of high cultivation. In particular spots, where pleasure-houses or places of rest or retire-

ment were erected, the views appear to have been studied. The trees were not only placed according to their magnitudes, but the tints of their foliage seemed also to have been considered in the composition of the picture, which some of the landscapes may be called with great propriety."*

Whatever may be said of the artificial character that appears in everything Chinese at the present day, it is evident that in early times that people studied nature closely, and tried to reproduce the wildest beauties in all their works of art. We shall have more to say about this in an article upon the "Tea Gardens at Shanghai," where the windows and doorways are shaped after the fashion of flowers, fruits, and insects. In the Yuen-ming-yuen gardens there were the most elaborately carved examples of this peculiar and charming style of architecture, which the writer finds on his return from China to be almost unknown to English architects. It is strange that Sir Joseph Paxton and his colleagues who planned the courts in the Crystal Palace have altogether overlooked and ignored the school of Chinese architecture. We feel confident that if a Chinese court were added to the building, with the choicest examples from Peking, Canton, and other cities, it would vie with the best of them; while a Chinese garden on the lower part of the grounds would add greatly to their beauty, and interest every class of visitors.

Apologising for this digression, we return to our subject. "In these gardens there are said to be thirty-five distinct places of residence for the Emperor, with all the necessary appendages of building to each, for lodging the several officers of state, who are required to be present on court days and particular occasions, for the eunuchs, servants, and artificers, each composing a village of no inconsiderable magnitude. Those assemblages of buildings, which they dignify with the name of palaces, are, however, of such a nature as to be more remarkable for their number than for their splendour or magnificence. A great proportion of the buildings consists in mean cottages." Even the residences of the Emperor have a faded, and even tawdry appearance. This arises in a great measure from the neglect of keeping buildings in repair, which is remarkable in China. It would appear as if they treated a house like a human being, that must have its youth, manhood, and old age. When once a building is up, there it remains until it goes to decay, when it is taken down altogether, and a new one built in its place. The Chinese seem also to have great veneration for old buildings, as they entertain the same for the remains of their ancestors. We have seen their largest pagodas and temples crumbling away, with shrubs and even trees growing in the crevices aloft, but not a hand was stretched forth to root them out or repair the edifices.



A BRIDGE IN THE IMPERIAL GARDEN OF YUEN-MING-YUEN.
(*From a photograph.*)

In the buildings occupied by the Emperors and their court were kept all the jewels and articles of virtu which had been presented to them for centuries by the tributary princes of the empire and the ambassadors from foreign states. Here were black pearl ornaments from the Carea, gold-mounted saddles from Mongolia, ivory howdahs from Tonquin, massive gold images from Tibet, malachite and gold vases from Russia, ingenious musical clocks from France, and magnificently mounted carriages from England. These and a multitude of other curious articles were carelessly distributed among the apartments, which were hung with the most gorgeously embroidered silks and gold brocades, also curious tapestry, some of silk, exquisitely painted with landscapes and figures by the Jesuit fathers, when they were in high favour at the court of Kien-loong.

These valuable heirlooms, and the halls wherein they were deposited, were always jealously guarded by the "Keeper of the Seals," and no "barbarian" eye was allowed to look upon them. But a day came when the

* Barrow's "Travels in China."

gardens of Yuen-ming-yuen were trampled down by British and French soldiery; and these repositories of ages were sacked and given to the flames, as a just retribution for the tortures inflicted by the cruel mandarins upon Englishmen and Frenchmen, treacherously captured while under a flag of truce to negotiate terms of peace between the belligerents.

When the allied army marched triumphantly up to the walls of Peking, scattering the Tartar force "like chaff before the wind," it was about 20,000 strong, against 100,000 and more of the enemy. Lord Elgin accompanied the force as British ambassador, and directed the movements of the English and French generals. As the object of the expedition was to strike an effective blow at the imperial power, in order to bring it to honourable terms of submission, these movements were directed towards the mandarins and the Emperor himself as the centre of that power, while private life and property were everywhere respected; every possible means were taken to capture Chinese officials, and destroy government residences. Under the circumstances, it was ascertained that the debauched Emperor Hyen Foong had either left or was leaving his palace at Yuen-ming-yuen, with his concubines and retainers of the court. Application was made to Lord Elgin by the army to march on to that place and capture any mandarins that might be there, and sack the palaces in retaliation for the cruel murders of Major Brabazon, Mr. Bowlby, and others. His excellency acceded to the wish of the army, and justified the act, in his order to the generals, as a just retribution against the treacherous government of the country, while it carried out his policy of striking an effectual blow at the capital.

Our gallant allies, ever on the alert where *loot* or plunder may be got, reached the gardens before our soldiers, and thereby secured the most valuable articles found in the buildings.* These were deserted by all but a few servants, who informed the invaders that the Emperor and his court had departed a few days before. It was evident, however, that he had gone in hot haste, as the rich furniture of the private apartments, down to the unfinished embroidery work of the women in the seraglio, and their pet dogs, were left behind, while the collection of jewels, gold and silver ornaments, &c., remained untouched. As the nimble chasseurs dashed into these repositories of valuables, they seized indiscriminately what came first to hand; and as each soldier could only carry a certain weight, massive silver ornaments were discarded when they came across those made of gold. No regard was paid to the friable articles; so that the floors of the apartments were strewed with broken crystal shades, lamps, and porcelain vases, which were upset in the hurry of looking for the precious metals and gems, besides numerous large and fine specimens of antique China ware, which the soldiers smashed with the butt-ends of their muskets, when they were too bulky to carry away. Many of the wretched servants had to carry loads of this plunder, at the point of the bayonet, for the officers who came in for their share of the plunder.

When the British contingent, told off for this service, arrived at Yuen-ming-yuen, the cream of the spoil had been taken; nevertheless, they came in for their share, as a general prize committee was appointed to value the booty, so that an average in money was struck by the articles being sold by auction. However, it is well known that General Montauban did not give up the jewels which he appropriated to himself; for afterwards he made presents to the Empress of the French, and other ladies at the French court of Paris, to the value of more than a million francs, none of which were included in the prize fund. Among the articles that fell to the lot of the English was the great seal of the empire, which a private soldier picked up in the Emperor's bureau. This seal being made of jade-stone, and of large dimensions, of an oblong-square form, engraved with ancient Chinese characters, was supposed by its possessor to be an ordinary curiosity, as ornaments in that kind of stone, some exquisitely cut in cameo and intaglio, are common in China; so he sold it to an English trader in Shanghai for a few dollars. After peace was concluded, search was made for the missing seal, and a reward of £300 offered to any one who would give it up. From Shanghai it had been taken to Hong Kong by a clerk in a merchant's office there, who delivered up the "sacred seal," and pocketed the reward.

Since war broke down the barrier of exclusiveness, momentous occurrences have changed the policy, if not the destinies, of that multitudinous empire. The debauchee Emperor died at his Tartar palace of Zehol, and his obnoxious ministers have been strangled and decapitated. His son, a minor, succeeded to the throne, with his uncle, Prince Kung, his mother, and the Dowager Empress as a Regency. The court now resides chiefly at the imperial palace at Peking, where the juvenile Emperor is being educated under a more enlightened policy, which recognises the institutions of Western nations as beneficial to the material and moral progress of the east. Still the blow so effectually struck by Great Britain and France at the very foundation of this ancient Asiatic power, which feels keenly the glaring insult to its *prestige* in the desecration of the monarch's palaces, rankles in the breasts of the ministers and regents. There is no desire to occupy once more these halls of his ancestors by the reigning prince. The wreck of the buildings and their contents, burnt and destroyed in the pillage, has been cleared away; but no new edifices have risen on their site; and it will be many a long year, if ever, till the Emperors of China hold their luxurious court at the abandoned gardens and palaces of Yuen-ming-yuen.

* A large collection of the French "loot" has been this summer exhibited in London by its owner, Captain de Negroni.

TOTAL ECLIPSES OF THE SUN.

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CHAPTER I.

No astronomical phenomenon creates such universal interest in the scientific world as a total eclipse of the sun. Whether it be viewed as a sublime spectacle, or as a means of increasing our knowledge of the physical constitution of the sun and moon, its importance has been acknowledged during many centuries. Even if we omit the hidden glories revealed by the telescope, the mind of the observer cannot fail to be impressed with feelings of astonishment, not unmixed with terror, at the magnificent, though unnatural, appearance of the earth and heavens, when suddenly enveloped in the gloomy darkness produced by a total solar eclipse. At the same time, the encircled black moon now high in the firmament, the sole cause of this sudden darkness, is quietly performing her natural revolution around our earth, fulfilling to a hairbreadth the unerring laws of the Great Creator.

The most ancient record of a solar eclipse is to be found in the "Shoo King," the oldest historical treatise in the Chinese language. In that work it is related that in the reign of Chung Kang, the fourth emperor

of the Hea dynasty, an eclipse of the sun took place. The passage recording this event occurs incidentally in an account of He and Ho, two important scientific officers, who appear to have had the superintendence of astronomical questions, and thus were responsible to the emperor for the due performance of all predictions of eclipses, which were always required, on account of certain religious ceremonies being usually performed on these occasions. Being, however, rather too fond of wine, these unfortunate astronomers neglected their duties, and consequently, failing in the prediction of the eclipse in question, rendered themselves liable to the punishment of death, which, according to the old chronicle, was duly inflicted. In the "She Ke," a collection of Chinese history, in three hundred volumes, this tragic anecdote is repeated. Mr. Williams, of the Astronomical Society, after a critical examination of the "Shoo King," and other Chinese works, has come to the conclusion that this eclipse occurred in the year B.C. 2158.

Several instances of similar phenomena have been handed down to us by the Greek and Roman historians. Many of them have been mentioned in connection with some historical event, and have served to fix the precise date of its occurrence, thus forming an accurate epoch for chronological reference.

Two total eclipses of the sun are mentioned by Dionysius of Halicarnassus to have occurred, one at the birth, the other at the death of Romulus, in each of which the obscurity has been asserted to have been as great as in the darkest night. Little credit has, however, been given to this record. It was a common belief in ancient times that every great event was governed by some portentous appearance in the heavens, eclipses of the sun being always considered to be calamitous omens, predicting the death of kings or some other high personages. This superstition was evidently in the mind of Milton when he penned—

"As when the sun new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs: darkened so, yet shone
Above them all th' Archangel."

The eclipse of Thales of Miletus, as recorded by Herodotus, is a notable example of the power of modern science, which has been able in this instance to identify, as a historical fact, the date of an occurrence which might otherwise have been left for ever in obscurity. Chronologists know well how important it is to fix the date of ancient events with some degree of certainty. No one considers this subject of greater importance than the present Astronomer-Royal, who has devoted much time in the endeavour to fix definitively the date of this eclipse as a standard epoch in the old Grecian and Persian histories. Using the new lunar tables of Professor Hansen, which were constructed from the Greenwich observations of the moon, Mr. Airy has finally decided that the eclipse must have taken place on May 28th, B.C. 585. The substance of the account of the battle fought on the day of this eclipse, as related by Herodotus, is—that upon the refusal of Alyattes, king of the Lydians, to deliver up some Scythian fugitives to Cyaxares, king of the Medes, war broke out between the two nations. Hostilities continued between them during five years with equal success. In a battle which took place in the sixth year of the war, the day suddenly turned into night. The effect on the soldiers through this unlooked-for transition from light to darkness was so great, that, probably from fear, both sides ceased fighting simultaneously, and each endeavoured anxiously to obtain peace. This eclipse was foretold by Thales sometime before the battle, and is the most ancient record of an undoubted astronomical prediction.

Xenophon relates in his "Anabasis" that when the Persians obtained the empire of the East from the Medes, the king of the Persians besieged the city of Larissa, supposed by Layard, Jones, and others to be the modern Nimroud, but he could not succeed in capturing it. But a cloud covered the sun and caused it to disappear completely, creating so great a consternation among the inhabitants that they withdrew; and thus the city was taken. It has been found, from calculation, that a total eclipse of the sun actually occurred on May 19, B.C. 557, a date which agrees sensibly with that on which the disappearance of the sun is related to have taken place at Larissa. As a further proof of the identity of the ancient record with modern research, it has been found that the central band of totality passed over the district known now as Turkey in Asia.

A phenomenon, which appears to have been very similar to a total eclipse of the sun, is recorded to have taken place about the year B.C. 480. It is thus described by Herodotus:—"With spring the army, being ready, set out from Sardes on its march to Abydos; and as it was setting out, the sun, leaving his seat in heaven, became invisible, when there were no clouds but a perfectly clear sky; and instead of day it became night. Xerxes, who saw this and heard about it, felt some anxiety, and inquired of the magi what the appearance portended; they replied that the deity prognosticated to the Greeks the desertion of their cities; saying that the sun was the prognosticator for the Greeks, the moon for the Persians. When Xerxes heard this he was very joyful, and proceeded on his march." This event, which has been interpreted as a total eclipse of the sun, has given much trouble to chronologists, who cannot make the historical record agree with modern calculations.

Another very important chronological eclipse is recorded by Diodorus Siculus. The fact of this solar eclipse having occurred, as related by the historian, has been confirmed beyond question by the Astronomer-Royal and others. The computed date is August 15, B.C. 310. Agathocles, being blockaded in the harbour of Syracuse by the Carthaginians, secretly formed the design of invading the Carthaginian territories, but was unable for several days to evade the enemy's fleet. At length a convoy of provision-ships appeared; the blockading ships left their stations to attack the convoy, when Agathocles seized the opportunity for leaving the harbour. The Carthaginians soon discovered that Agathocles had fled, when they left the convoy and followed him, but he escaped with difficulty under cover of the night. "The next day," says Diodorus, "there was such an eclipse of the sun that the day wholly put on the appearance of night, stars being seen everywhere."

A well-authenticated total eclipse of the sun occurred on August 31, A.D. 1030. It is well known in Norwegian history as causing a great consternation at the battle of Sticklastad, during which the Danish king Olaf was slain.

In addition to the preceding ancient records of total eclipses, many others have taken place, especially in China, but very few reliable data can be gathered historically concerning them, though the truth of several has been confirmed by modern researches.

Phenomena of this kind are of rare occurrence in any one particular portion of our globe. In England, for example, no total eclipse of the sun has been observed since the 3rd May, 1715, new style. On this occasion

the narrow band of total phase passed over London. Several other total eclipses have been recorded by some of our ancient chroniclers as having taken place in former times. In an old Saxon chronicle relating to the events of the year 1140, it is recorded that "In the Lent the sun and the day darkened about the noon-tide of the day, when men were eating; and they lighted candles to eat by. That was the thirteenth day before the calends of April. Men were very much struck with wonder." William of Malmesbury also states, in reference to this eclipse, that while persons were sitting at their meals, the darkness became so great that many thought that chaos was coming, and, on going out, several stars were seen near the sun. According to the computations of Dr. Halley, this eclipse took place in March 1140. A remarkable total eclipse of the sun, visible in Scotland, occurred on June 17, 1433. The time of complete obscuration was long remembered in that country as the *Black Hour*. Another took place in 1598, on a Saturday, which was frequently alluded to for a considerable period in the border counties of England and Scotland as *Black Saturday*.

Though these and a few other instances have occurred in which the inhabitants of England have had an opportunity of witnessing this phenomenon, with its startling effect on the imagination and feelings, yet eclipses of this kind are so very rare in our country that the modern English astronomer has been obliged to visit other countries over which the narrow band of total darkness passed. Forming one of an expedition to Norway in 1851 for this purpose, I think the readers of "The Leisure Hour" will be interested in a brief description or epitome of what an astronomer sees on these occasions, with and without the aid of a telescope, especially as the writer has been an eye-witness of all the different phenomena.

It is not necessary for me to explain here the exact causes of a total eclipse of the sun, because, were I to do this in detail, my paper would extend to a far greater length than would be prudent, and would probably curtail the remarks which I wish to give. Besides, that explanation can be easily obtained in most elementary works on astronomy. It will be sufficient, therefore, to state that, when numerous objects are scattered over the firmament at different distances and in varying positions, it sometimes happens that three objects will come into the same line, or nearly so, by the interposition of the central object. Now this is precisely the case in an eclipse of the sun, when we have the sun, moon, and earth in a line, and, as viewed from the surface of the earth, the moon is the intermediate body. In a total eclipse of the sun it happens that, at the greatest phase, the centre of the moon passes over the centre of the sun, and as on these occasions the apparent diameter of the moon is slightly in excess of that of the sun, the latter body becomes invisible to the inhabitants of a small portion of the earth contained within the zone of totality. In favourable eclipses the duration of total darkness is generally about three or four minutes. This, however, depends on the position of the moon in her orbit, because her apparent diameter visibly increases or diminishes from day to day as she approaches or recedes from the earth. The sun's diameter also varies, but in a less degree. When at the time of eclipse the moon is in apogee, or at her greatest distance from the earth, her apparent diameter is less than that of the sun, so that, though the two centres are coincident as before, no total eclipse can take place; but the sun being now the apparent larger body, a ring is formed around the dark moon, causing an annular eclipse. One of this kind was very satisfactorily observed in the north of England on May 15, 1836, an event probably remembered by many. When the centres of the sun and moon are not coincident, as viewed from the earth, we have then a partial eclipse. This last phenomenon is of frequent occurrence. The phenomena visible during a total eclipse of the sun (as seen in our coloured illustration) may be limited to the following classes:—1, The corona, or ring of light, surrounding the dark body of the moon; 2, The brilliant star-like points seen immediately before the commencement or after the end of complete obscuration, commonly called "Baily's beads;" 3, Irregular flame-looking protuberances on the dark edge of the moon, usually of a pink or rose colour; 4, Effects of total obscuration on scenery and animals. My remarks will therefore be confined generally to these four phenomena.

The luminous ring, or corona, is an exceedingly interesting object. Ancient, as well as modern, philosophers have written of its beautiful appearance. Philostratus, in his "Life of Apollonius," says, "In the heavens there appeared a prodigy of this nature. A certain corona, resembling the iris, surrounded the orb of the sun, and obscured his light." Plutarch has also alluded to the corona. Confining ourselves to more modern observations, Dr. Halley, who observed the eclipse of May 3, 1715, from the apartments of the Royal Society, Crane Court, Fleet Street, remarked that "A few seconds before the sun was all hid there was discovered around the moon a luminous ring, about a digit, or perhaps a tenth part of the moon's diameter in breadth. It was of a pale whiteness, or rather pearl colour. . . . . The ring appeared much brighter and whiter near the body of the moon than at a distance from it." M. De Louville, a French *savant* who observed the eclipse with Dr. Halley, also noticed the luminous ring, which appeared to him coloured with a deep red around the edge of the moon. Mr. Baily, who observed the eclipse of July 8, 1842, at Pavia, remarked that the breadth of the corona, if measured from the circumference of the moon, appeared to be nearly equal to half the moon's diameter. It had the appearance of brilliant rays, the colour being quite white. The rays had a vivid and flickering appearance, something similar to that which a gaslight illumination might be supposed to assume. On the same occasion Mr. Airy saw the eclipse from the neighbourhood of Turin, when he noticed the corona as a ring of faint, nearly white light; but clouds interfered in some measure with his observations. In the eclipse of the 28th July, 1851, the corona was seen by Mr. Airy much more favourably. He remarks that "The corona was far broader than that which I saw in 1842. Roughly speaking, its breadth was little less than the moon's diameter, but its outline was very irregular. I did not remark any beams projecting from it which deserved notice as much more conspicuous than the others, but the whole was beamy, radiated in structure, and terminated (though very indefinitely) in a way which reminded me of the ornament frequently placed round a mariner's compass. Its colour was white, or resembling that of Venus." Appearances similar to those described have been seen at different eclipses by the numerous observers who have now witnessed a total eclipse. It is not necessary, however, to examine the separate accounts of these astronomers, whose notices of the corona agree sensibly with those of Mr. Airy and Mr. Baily.

The origin of the corona has been the subject of many astronomical discussions. It was suggested by Kepler, supposing the phenomenon were connected with the moon, that an explanation of it could be given by con-

jecturing that, as the rays of light were proceeding from the sun to the earth, they might be refracted whilst penetrating the moon's atmosphere, occasioning an appearance analogous to the corona. Dr. Halley looked with some favour upon this hypothesis. Because this astronomer, in the eclipse of 1715, observed that the corona appeared to him to be concentric with the moon, he concluded that it was possibly owing to the moon's atmosphere, as suggested by Kepler. Dr. Halley does not, however, give this opinion without some qualification; for he has stated that the great length of the rays far exceeded the height of the earth's atmosphere; and "the observations of some who found the breadth of the ring to increase on the west side of the moon as the emersion approached, together with the contrary sentiments of those whose judgments I shall always revere, make me less confident, especially in a matter whereto, I must confess, I gave not all the attention requisite." In the opinion of Dr. Halley, the corona was much brighter and whiter near the edge of the moon than at a distance from it. It resembled, in all respects, the appearance of an enlightened atmosphere viewed from a great distance: but he would not undertake to decide finally from the observations to which body the luminous ring belonged. With regard to the intrinsic brightness of the corona, most astronomers have seen it disappear at the appearance of the first direct ray of light from the sun; but M. Secchi, in 1860, distinctly saw the corona forty seconds after the end of total obscuration.

The form of the corona is estimated very differently by the observers, arising principally from the hurried nature of the observations. The corona as observed by Mr. Swan, at Göttenburg, in 1851, and by M. Plantemour, at Castellon de la Plana, Spain, in 1860, given in the coloured illustration, are good examples of what was seen by two experienced observers.

Various experiments have been made to obtain an artificial illustration of the corona by M. De La Hire, M. Delisle, Professor Powell, and others. No very decided result, however, was obtained by their researches.

So much attention has been given to this phenomenon at every eclipse since 1842, that astronomers are now quite agreed to consider that the corona is an appendage of the sun. Our instrumental means and increased experience have given us authority to come to this conclusion. The telescope of modern times far exceeds the instruments of 1715 in penetrating power, which enables us to decide most of the previous speculations on the existence or non-existence of a lunar atmosphere. The instruments used by the astronomers of 1715 must have been comparatively very imperfect, if I may judge from specimens of the telescopes used by Dr. Halley at the Royal Observatory, and now preserved in that establishment.*

Among the many proofs of the non-existence of a lunar atmosphere, it may be mentioned that no water can be seen; at least, there is not a sufficient quantity in any one spot so as to be visible from the earth. Again, there are no clouds; for if there were, we should immediately discover them by the variable light and shade which they would produce. But it appears to me that one great proof of the absence of any large amount of vapour being suspended over the lunar surface is the sudden extinction of a star when occulted by the moon. I have now been a constant observer of these phenomena for the last twenty years, and, though my experience is of this long standing, I have never observed an occultation of a star or planet, especially at the unilluminated edge of a *young* moon, without having my convictions confirmed that there is no appreciable lunar atmosphere. In occultations of this kind the star is seen to approach the dark edge of the moon, which is very visible, owing to the reflected light of the earth shining on it. If there be any atmosphere of reasonable density around the moon, small stars would disappear, or, at any rate, would considerably diminish in their intrinsic brightness, before they reach the unilluminated edge. But this is never the case: for they are seen in their full lustre till their extinction at the moon's limb. The disappearance of the star takes place in so abrupt and startling a manner as frequently to draw forth an exclamation of surprise from the observer. Professor Challis has lately subjected the results of a large number of these observations to a severe mathematical test; but he has not been able to discover the slightest trace of any effect produced by a lunar atmosphere. The suggestions of Kepler, Halley, and others as to the origin of the corona are not, therefore, in unison with the general opinions of modern times.

The most probable explanation of the luminous ring, and which is generally received at the present day, is, that it arises from the presence of an atmosphere around the sun. This supposition is greatly strengthened by the elaborate astro-chemical investigations made of late years, principally by MM. Kirchhoff and Bunsen. Astronomers are indebted in no small degree to these celebrated physicists, who have led the inquiry into the physical constitution of the gaseous envelope which surrounds the centre of our system. That our knowledge of its chemical composition, as well as that of other celestial bodies, will be much increased by the researches of these and similar observers, is the opinion of all the leading men in astronomy. All honour, then, be to such patient and laborious investigators!

* The progress of observing astronomy cannot be better illustrated than by inspecting the different transit-instruments used at the Royal Observatory from the time of Dr. Halley. A comparison of the telescope used by that astronomer with the present transit-circle is at once interesting and instructive.

ZOOLOGICAL NOTES

BY J. K. LORD, F.Z.S.

"A PHEASANT DANCE."

THE sharp-tailed grouse (*Pediocaetis phasianellus*) have a very singular fashion of celebrating their love-meetings. By the fur traders and trappers these festivities are called "chicken" or "pheasant dances."

Their usual time for assembling, during the mating season, is about sunrise; a high round-topped mound being chosen as "the monster platform," and ere the fair are wooed and won, and the happy couples depart, to commence their domestic joys and sorrows, the mound becomes beaten and trampled as bare and hard as a turnpike road.

The pairing takes place very early in the spring, even before the snow has melted off the ground. I had often longed to witness one of these bird-balls, and it so happened that whilst camping at Fort Colville, on the Upper Columbia river, my most ardent wishes were fully realized.

The grey light of the morning was just creeping stealthily into the valleys and ravines, as I rode into the mountains to visit my traps; everything was still, the busy hum of day had not commenced, and the night prowlers were gone to their lairs. Suddenly the well-

known note of the sharp-tailed grouse—chuck, chuck, chuck—came clear and shrill, borne upon the crisp, frosty air, telling me in unmistakable language that a dance was afoot. To tie my horse and dog was the work of a moment; then, taking advantage of some rocks, I crept cautiously along, and without exciting observation managed to conceal myself behind an old pine log, close to a hillock, on which, sure enough, a ball was at its height.

There were from eighteen to twenty birds present on this occasion, and it was almost impossible to distinguish the males from the females, the plumage being so nearly alike, but I felt sure the females were the passive ones. The four birds nearest to me were head to head, like game-cocks in fighting attitude, the neck feathers ruffed up, the little sharp tail elevated straight on end; the wings, partly open, but drooped close to the ground, kept up by a rapid vibration a continuous throbbing or drumming sound. They circled round and round in slow waltzing time, always maintaining the same attitude, but never striking at or grappling with each other. Soon the pace increased, and one hotly pursued the other, until he faced about, then *tête-à-tête* both went waltzing round again.

This over, the festivities were varied in a "curious" way. About eight of the birds (males I supposed them to be) commenced jumping about two feet into the air, until completely out of breath; then marching and strutting about, they "struck attitudes," as acrobats invariably do after a successful tumble. Then there were others parading round and round, their heads and tails carried as high as they could stick them up, evidently doing the "heavy swell;" others, again, did not appear to have any well-defined idea as to what they ought to do, so kept flying up, and pitching down again, manifestly restless and excited—perhaps rejected suitors, contemplating something desperate. The music to this eccentric dance was the loud "chuck, chuck, chuck," continuously repeated, and the strange throbbing sound produced by the rapid vibration of the wings. I attended several balls after this, but in every case the same series of evolutions was carried out. Pairing completed, the assemblies cease until the coming spring. The birds make a nest on the ground, in the open prairie, laying about fourteen eggs. After August, the coveys or broods begin to "pack;" first two or three broods join, then these flocks unite with other flocks, until they accumulate literally into legions.

A word, *en passant*, as to this bird's adaptability to acclimatization. It appears to me that it would be most admirably fitted for our hill and moorland districts. Very hardy, capable of bearing cold 30° below zero, feeding on seeds, berries, and vegetable productions, analogous to what could be found on our hill country, nesting early, it would be fit to shoot about the same time as our own grouse. Snow does them no harm, as they burrow into it, and feed on what they can find underneath. The young could be very easily procured in May, at any point up the Columbia river, by employing the Indians to bring them to the river side; and, once on board a vessel, they could be fed as easily as fowls.

OYSTER CULTURE AT HERNE BAY.

SINCE writing the paper on oysters, in Number 717, Mr. F. Buckland invited me to pay him a visit at Herne Bay, for the purpose of witnessing the arrangements, that are now near completion, for artificial oyster culture. The somewhat costly and skilful contrivances for collecting young oysters (which I shall speak of further on) are carried out under the immediate direction of Mr. Buckland, for the Herne Bay and Reculver Oyster Company. It will perhaps be as well to give a brief sketch of the origin and history of the new oyster company, as a preface to the description of what they are now doing.

I have stated in the preceding article that there are certain spots peculiarly adapted to fatten oysters. What oysters feed on—I believe I am safe in saying—no man knows; perhaps minute forms of life, that abound in the drainage of cities, or, it may be, on the materials brought from huge London by the Thames, and from other places, by its sister the Medway. This much, however, is certain—the flats extending from the mouth of the Thames down channel, passing Whitstable, Herne Bay, and many celebrated localities, "oyster grounds," are alike famous for fattening quicker and better than other known places.

Three things, it would appear, are to a certain extent essential to successful oyster breeding and feeding: a large supply of fresh water, banks or flats possessing qualities congenial to the bivalve's habits, and an abundance of food fitted to its tastes. These essentials are all present on the flats at Herne Bay, flats that at one time, so says a dredgerman to me, "were one solid mass of oysters;" but reckless and destructive dredging in time quite exhausted these once abundant oyster-beds: just as at the Isle de Ré, where the oyster-beds from a similar cause had become valueless. No capital or labour was bestowed to replace the exhausted crop; and thus, like an overworked estate, sapped of its fertility, it starved, rather than supported, those who struggled for a meagre existence from its produce.

In this state of affairs a company, in July 1864, applied to Parliament for a grant of fore-shore off Herne Bay, for the purpose of *cultivating oysters*. It need only be mentioned incidentally here that the grant sought for was strongly opposed by various parties interested in the supply of oysters to London and other markets. A grant, however, was made, to this effect—that the Herne Bay and Reculver Oyster Company should have a right of fore-shore extending six miles in length and a mile and a half in width from high-water-mark, the company being bound to try various experiments, following the plans so successfully practised by the French and previously described, at the same time to adopt such other expedients as the director of the works, Mr. F. Buckland, might deem best.

Mr. Fennell, the Government Inspector of Fisheries, fortunately arrived at Herne Bay the same time as myself, to make his official inspection. Starting about eleven o'clock, we commenced dredging oysters that had been purchased to fatten. It may be as well to mention, *en passant*, that the company has already expended a very large sum of money in the purchase of what is technically styled *brood;* in other words, small, thin oysters from distant places: we may instance Falmouth, Milford, Ireland, the Mid-Channel, and various other localities, where the stock are usually procured for fattening, just as lean bullocks are brought from Holland, Ireland, and elsewhere into the rich pastures of North and South Devon, to fatten for market.

The first dredge brought up oysters from Milford; and truly was it a most interesting sight: nearly every oyster had a fringe of new shell, like the most delicate mother-of-pearl, of peach-blossom hue, completely encircling the edges of the old shells; thus beautifully evidencing the rapidity of growth, only a few months having elapsed since they were "planted." A few were opened, and, of course, eaten; or how could the inspector or others test their quality and flavour? Individually, I

can bear testimony to the fact that those I tasted were rapidly becoming fat and full-flavoured. Then various other banks were dredged, with a like successful result. I know of few prettier sights than that of witnessing the upsetting of a dredge: a strange assemblage of quaint creatures were tumbled out together upon the deck, alike astonished, frightened, and in strange perplexity as to their whereabouts. Here were crabs, with their nipper claws squared like the arms of a prize-fighter, sidling off for any place of concealment; hermit-crabs, in shells of all sizes, scampering away, with their houses on their backs; here, too, was the much-despised five-rayed star-fish, "five-fingers," and his brother the sun-star (*Solaster papposus*), his back like brilliant red coral. The dredgermen hate the "five-fingers," because he eats oysters, but respect the sun-star, inasmuch as he, so they say, prefers feeding on his relatives to dining on a dainty native. Brittle-stars were there also; the *Ophiuridæ*, so called from the serpent-like form of their rays; jelly-fish, corallines, sponges, and a thousand lesser forms of life as marvellous and beautiful as their larger brethren. The very sea itself appeared to be perfectly filled with what had the appearance to the eye of minute particles of dust; but, on dipping some of it up, and placing it under the microscope, it turned out to be masses of eggs. One really feels staggered at the vast profusion of life that teems in the sea. These eggs must, if not destroyed, come to something. This something must feed and be fed on: mere hints, after all, of what the populous variety must be at a greater depth; and, as Kingsley aptly says, "one would wish himself a water-ouzel, to walk under the waves as it does in the pools of the mountain burns."

The dredging over, we next investigated at low tide the preparations to induce the spat to stick—in plain English, to afford protection to the young oyster whilst it rows itself about with its ring of bristled propellers, at the same time offering him a suitable medium to adhere to. Several plans, very analogous to those in use by the French, are already completed: these consist of large inclosures, in shape square, formed by strong hurdles fastened tightly together. Within these inclosures are placed numerous tiles, so arranged as to form tunnels for the "baby" oyster to fix himself fast in; then there are other inclosures which Mr. Buckland calls "gardens," some triangular, others oblong—indeed, of varying shapes—but made by driving strong stakes into the ground, and wreathing smaller sticks between them, as baskets are made: in these gardens tiles are placed, together with old oyster-shells and broken pottery. Then there are long fences, placed at irregular distances, behind which tiles also are laid, whilst heaps of tiles are scattered about in every direction, without protection or fence of any kind. In all the inclosures spatting oysters (oysters that are ready to spawn) are placed; so that when the spawn or spat is *puffed* out it may have every possible protection against waves, wind, sand, mud, and other causes alike detrimental and often fatal to its fragile life. Over 4000 tiles have been already laid down.

Thanks to Mr. Buckland's zeal and unwearying energy, every necessary care has been taken to protect the spat; and I can safely say, if the young oysters refuse to stick or to avail themselves of such admirable means of safety, and by their reckless obstinacy come to an untimely end, it is their own fault. I did not see any spat that had, so far, adhered to either tile or cultch (old shells); but I did see living spat taken from an oyster we dredged up, which was at once placed in a bottle of sea-water; and, as the rays of the sun warmed and lighted up the bottle and its contents, one could witness for himself a sight worth coming any distance from anywhere to see: myriads of tiny oysters were ascending and descending, performing all sorts of strange gambols, rowing themselves with their ciliated arms, executing dances of most complicated figures, each individual appearing as though wishing to outvie its neighbour in excess of delight. Some of these we placed under a high magnifying power, when the two perfectly-formed shells and coronet of vibratile cilia were beautifully shown. This proves incontestably that there are spatting oysters; and I can see no reason why young oysters, if spatted in a healthy condition, should not adhere to the tiles placed specially for them. They do so readily enough in the French oyster-park; and why should they not in the English? If they do stick, it will be a grand success for the company. But what is of equal, if not of greater importance, it will be the first step in the right direction towards cheapening the oyster, rendering it an article of food rather than of luxury.

If the salmon question is a great and important one, as applied to the rivers, surely the oyster is of equal moment. If the sea can be farmed to profitably produce food within reach of the poor man's means, why, all praise and honour to those who first sow and then reap the crop. The question as to how animal food is to be supplied to meet the scant wages of the poor is at present a most momentous one; day by day beef, pork, and mutton grow dearer, and, if half what is said be true, will soon attain a rate beyond the means of any but the wealthy. Then, if oysters, salmon—and it with equal force applies to other edible fish—can, by a due and judicious application of skill and capital, be supplied at a cheaper rate, surely it is wise and right that capital and labour so employed should be legally protected. Stop unlawful dredging; make June, July, and August close months; let the sea have protection like the rivers and the land; and I venture to predict that fish—be it shell or otherwise—will be again plentiful, and as a consequence cheap, as in "the good old days that are gone."

Original Fables.

THE POPPY AND THE DAISY.

"How in the world came you there?" said a flaring, scarlet Poppy to a cheery, crimp little Daisy that grew at his feet.

"That's more than I can tell," said the Daisy.

"Don't you feel ashamed of being so near me?" said the Poppy.

"Not at all," said the Daisy.

"Don't you see how tall I am?" said the Poppy.

"Very tall," said the Daisy.

"And handsome?" said the Poppy.

"Yes," said the Daisy.

"Don't you feel afraid of me?" said the Poppy.

"Not a bit," said the Daisy.

"How very short *you* are!" said the Poppy.

"Very," said the Daisy.

"And insignificant," said the Poppy.

"Yes," said the Daisy.

"And ugly," said the Poppy.

"I deny *that*," said the Daisy.

"No one would look twice at you," said the Poppy.

"Perhaps not," said the Daisy.

"The people pass through the field and don't see you," said the Poppy.

"Do they?" said the Daisy.

"They can't help seeing *me!*" said the Poppy.
"No, I'm sure they can't," said the Daisy.
"And they admire *me!*" said the Poppy.
"Do they?" said the Daisy.
"You *know* they do," said the Poppy, growing redder with passion.
"I'm sure I don't," said the Daisy.
"You're as envious as you can be," said the Poppy.
"Quite a mistake," said the Daisy.
"Oh, you would give the whole field to be in my place," said the Poppy.
"I wouldn't," said the Daisy.
"Who would spend a thought on *you?*" said the Poppy, contemptuously.
"Robert Burns," said the Daisy.
"I wish the reapers would come to cut the corn."
"So do I," said the Daisy.
"Why do *you* want them?" said the Poppy.
"Simply because you do," said the Daisy.
"Very fine! it's your conceit; you think they will look at you," said the Poppy.
"No I don't indeed," said the Daisy.
"They won't trouble themselves about you," said the Poppy.
"I hope not," said the Daisy.
"I shall turn my back on you," said the Poppy.
"Do," said the Daisy.
"Are you not very sorry?" said the Poppy.
"Not at all," said the Daisy.
"I despise you," said the Poppy.
"Do you?" said the Daisy.
"It makes me ill to look at you," said the Poppy.
"How wise of you to turn round, then!" said the Daisy.
"You couldn't turn your back on me," said the Poppy.
"No, I'm such a stiff little thing," said the Daisy.
"What made you turn round again?" said the Daisy.
"Oh, dear!" said the Poppy.
"What's the matter?" said the Daisy.
"The reapers are coming," said the Poppy.
"Don't you want them?" said the Daisy.
"Oh, I'm afraid they'll cut me down," said the Poppy; "they've just cut down a whole company of us."
"Ah! you're so tall," said the Daisy.
"Alas, alas!" sighed the Poppy.
"And so handsome," said the Daisy.
"Ah!" said the Poppy.
"They'll be sure to see you," said the Daisy.
"Oh, don't!" groaned the Poppy; "I wish I were short, like you."
"I *am* very short," said the Daisy.
"They won't see you," said the Poppy.
"No, nobody looks at me," said the Daisy.
"Good-bye, Daisy, they are close; I shall soon be cut down," said the Poppy.
"Good-bye," said the Daisy.
"I've been very rude to you; will you forgive me?" said the Poppy.
"Oh, don't mention it," said the Daisy.
"Are you sorry for me?" said the Poppy.
"Yes, with all my heart," said the Daisy.
"You're a dear, kind little thing," said the Poppy.
"Thank you kindly," said the Daisy.
"You never made much of yourself," said the Poppy.
"I never had the chance," said the Daisy.

Poor Poppy! he never spoke more. The scythe reached him just as the Daisy was closing for the night, and when she opened in the bright, fresh morning, he lay prostrate beside her. While she was thinking over his fate a heavy heel pressed on her and drove her almost into the earth, and she thought she should never get up again. But she did, and soon looked as cheery as ever, and was more convinced than ever that it was better to grow low than high, and to be plain than to be gaudy, and felt that she had rather be a poor little Daisy than the handsomest Poppy that ever graced the fields.

NOT PLEASANT TO HAVE ONE'S DEATH RECKONED ON.

"THERE! get into your stye, and be quick," said Growler to the old Sow; "fine thing, indeed, for me to have to watch and drive the like of you."

"Good, now," grunted the Sow, "don't be so consequential. I'm of a pretty deal more importance than you are; every bit of me, to my bristles, is good and valuable."

"So it ought to be," said Growler, "considering all the meat that's spent upon you, and that you do nothing while you're alive but eat and enjoy yourself. For my part, I greatly prefer making myself of such use that my master finds as much profit in my life as he expects in your death."

LOOK TO THE ROOT OF THE FAMILY TREE.

"GENTLEMEN," said an old Tea Kettle that lay in a corner of a shed into which some worn-out locomotives had been stowed away—"gentlemen, I am sorry to see you in this place; I wasn't brought here till I had more than once lost my spout and handle, and been patched and soldered till very little of my original was left. I conclude, therefore, that, like me, you have seen your best days, and are now to be laid aside as useless."

The Locomotives frowned at one another, but didn't answer.

"Well, gentlemen and brothers," cried the Kettle again, "don't be down-hearted; we have played busy and useful parts in our day, and may comfort ourselves now in thinking over the things we have respectively achieved. As for *me*, the remembrance of the domestic delight and refreshment that I have been the means of affording affects me deeply."

"What is that little old tin whistling about up in the corner?" asked one of the Locomotives of his companion; "where are his *brothers?*"

"Hey-day! is that it?" cried the Kettle, all alive with indignation; "so you don't own the relationship. Let me tell you, with all your pitiful pride, that, though you won't own me as a brother, I am father and mother to you; for who would ever have heard of a steam-engine if it hadn't been for a tea-kettle?"

A SHUT UP TO AN EVEN QUESTION.

"How well I whistle!" said the Wind to the Keyhole.

"Well, if that isn't rich!" said the Keyhole to the Wind; "you mean how well *I* whistle."

"Get me some paper," said the old woman, "and stuff up that keyhole and stop the draught."

And so neither Wind nor Keyhole whistled any longer.

THE HORSE WAS STOLEN.

"THE horse will be stolen," cried all the town; and they came together to consult on the best means of saving it.

"I will tell you," said the Smith; "let me put double bolts and locks, and a strong chain across the door, and then he will be safe."

"What an idea!" cried the Carpenter; "of course your only plan is to have wooden shutters to the airholes and windows, and a strong new door."

"Nonsense!" cried the Mason. "Wall him up and feed him from the roof. I'll do it; he'll be safe then."

And some took part with the Mason, and some with the Carpenter, and some with the Smith; and they argued till they quarrelled, and quarrelled till they fought. In the thick of the fight one rushed in exclaiming—

"Sirs, you may save yourselves further trouble; the gipsies have done it! The horse is stolen."

QUESTIONABLE SYMPATHY.

"I'M extremely sorry for you," said the Trap to the Rat; "you don't know how it hurts me to hold you so tight; but you see it's my duty: nothing but my duty would make me so sacrifice my feelings."

"Much obliged to you," said the Rat; "but if it hurts you to hold me only half as much as it hurts me to be in your grip, double your duty wouldn't keep you true to your post for a minute."

LOOK UP AS WELL AS DOWN.

"OH, father! oh, mother! the moon is drowned—she is, indeed; we have seen her lying trembling in the lake," cried the owlets, bustling back to the tower, where their parents sat among the ivy.

"Children," said the old birds, "you looked *down* and saw the image in the lake; if you had looked *up* you would have seen the moon herself in the sky; but it is the way with novices to be led astray by representations of a subject which a little further inquiry would have shown them were wholly deceptive."